



## Agenda Item Summary

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### **Submitted By**

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### **Reviewed By**

LKS

### **Agenda Item Title**

**A Motion to Concur with the Energy and Environment Commission's (EEC) Recommendation to Prohibit the Use of Single-Use Plastics that Include Polystyrene Foam by All Eating Establishments and Direct Staff to Bring Forward the Necessary Ordinance**

### **Overview**

On November 18, 2019 the Village Board received a recommendation from the EEC to prohibit the use of single-use plastics that includes polystyrene foam by all eating establishments and scheduled a special meeting to discuss with the EEC in the new year. This meeting is with the EEC to review the recommendation. If the Village Board accepts the recommendation, staff will draft an ordinance for adoption at a subsequent meeting.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Concurs with the Commission.

Subject to the Village Board's approval, staff will identify costs and resources to set up this program.

### **Fiscal Impact**

N/A.

### **Background**

On May 20, 2019 the Village Board concurred with a recommendation from the Environment and Energy Commission (EEC) to create a "plastic free July campaign" (PFJ) for the restaurants in Oak Park. During that time, the EEC stated they would return to the Village Board and discuss the results of the campaign. Twelve restaurants participated in the Plastics Free Campaign in July.

At the September 3, 2019 Environment and Energy Commission, the Commission voted unanimously on a recommendation to the Village Board to pass an ordinance to ban single-use plastics that include polystyrene foam for all eating establishments. The EEC submitted their recommendation to the Village Board and on November 18, 2019 the Board received the recommendation and would schedule a discussion with the EEC in

the new year.

On January 7<sup>th</sup> 2020 the EEC met again to add to their originally submitted recommendation in November to also include consideration of an ordinance to ban single-use plastics and elimination of polystyrene foam and direct staff to prepare the necessary documents.

Plastic pollution is a global problem plaguing land and waterways locally. The associated pollution from this non-degradable plastic is unsustainable and pollutes our land and waters. Regionally, nearly 22 million pounds of plastic enters our Great Lakes waterways each year, contaminating our source of drinking water and ecosystems for millions of Illinoisans and wildlife.

There is an increasing amount of community action and discussion within environmental groups across the country about the negative impact of plastic drinking straws and all single-use plastics that include the abundant use of polystyrene foam. For example, the Shedd Aquarium, Field Museum, the Illinois Environmental Council, Alliance for the Great Lakes, Friends of the Chicago River and the Illinois Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) partnered with other local and national organizations on the primary goal of eliminating dangerous polystyrene and reducing the distribution of single-use plastics to protect public health while reducing land and water plastic pollution. Chicago Aldermen Waguespack (32<sup>nd</sup> Ward), Sadlowski Garza (10<sup>th</sup> Ward), Cardenas (12<sup>th</sup> Ward) and Martin (47<sup>th</sup> Ward) were joined by these advocates on January 15, 2020 to introduce a draft 'Plastic-Free Water' ordinance to the Chicago City Council Committee on Finance (attached). This ordinance has not been passed yet in Chicago. The proposed ordinance would give restaurants in Chicago until January 1, 2021 to stop the use of polystyrene containers and drastically limit the use of plastic service ware and straws. These organizations are using a mix of consumer, business, and policy strategies to drastically reduce plastic pollution.

The EEC collaborated with local community groups that were actively examining this issue and, along with dedicated members of the Interfaith Green Network and the League of Women Voters ("LWV"), reached out to experts in the field such as Andrea Densham (Shedd Aquarium's "Shedd the Straw" program), Surfrider foundation and Adam Ballard (Access Living), to draft recommendations that included the impact on restaurants and physically challenged and under-represented constituencies.

As part of the 2019 Plastics Free July campaign, the LWV had a number of flyers to educate restaurant staff and visited 90% of the local restaurants. They spoke with restaurant managers in Oak Park and received an eighty percent overall general endorsement of the effort. In addition to continued education and outreach, the team concluded that an ordinance in Oak Park would provide additional legitimacy to the effort.

The EEC also compiled input from surveys, personal interviews and examples from other municipalities. As part of the analysis, the EEC considered points of reference from Malibu and Seattle as implementation benchmarks for Oak Park to learn from. The team developed a select set of options for Oak Park that included regulation of single use plastics and elimination of polystyrene foam. The EEC also started to draft sample language for an ordinance that included the idea that any prospective enforcement fees go into a fund to support funding of a composting framework for Oak Park restaurants. In addition, Andrea Densham, Sr. Director of Policy and Advocacy for the Shedd Aquarium, has been working and learning from the City of

Charleston who has moved a similar piece of legislation forward and in January started implementation.

As a result of 8+ months of community outreach, data collection and research, the EEC recommended the following to address the reduction of single-use plastics, along with examples of city bans on single-use plastics and a sample ordinance for the Village of Oak Park:

1. Educate restaurant staff and Village residents on the use of plastic straws and other single-use plastics including plastic lids, containers and utensils. Together they contribute to high volumes of pollution, and most restaurant staff is not aware of the environmental impact.
2. Standardize to “upon request only” dispensing for single-use plastic items. A “customer request” recommendation is seen as the least offensive way to address groups who may request single-use plastics for physical, social, or economic reasons.
3. Implement data collection of single-use plastic inventory. Restaurants, EEC, Village staff and invested community groups should work together to collect baseline data about single-use plastics from Oak Park businesses. The data can be used to assess the plastic consumption.

The Village Board received this recommendation at the November 18, 2019 Regular Meeting.

The EEC further met on January 7<sup>th</sup> and added some additional recommendations:

- All “**Eating Establishments**” would be prohibited from offering to single use plastics except to provide them upon a customer’s request. Distribution and use of single use plastics through “eating establishments” will be prohibited at any other time.
- Codify a definition of **single use plastics** to include **polystyrene foam** (XPS) and plastic number 6, which the Village does not recycle. This definition would also include stirrers, straws, food containers, cups, bags, utensils, sauce containers, and lids and any other such item the Village assesses as single use.
- Codify a definition for “eating establishments” as any commercial business required to have a license to prepare, distribute, and serve food.

The attached recommendation report also includes recommended strategies of incentives, promotion of on-site composting, enforcement, measurement, outreach and training as well as the annual recognition of the Plastic Free July campaign.

## Alternatives

The Village Board could delay action and seek additional information.

**Previous Board Action**

None.

**Citizen Advisory Commission Action**

None.

**Anticipated Future Actions/Commitments**

N/A.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities**

N/A.

**Performance Management (MAP) Alignment**

N/A.